conducted by ORG Marg and PEO of Planning Commission. These reports found exclusion and inclusion errors in identification of BPL and AAY families. Based on these reports, a 9-Point Action Plan was evolved. Under this, State/UT Governments have been directed to continuously review the BPL and AAY lists to eliminate bogus/ineligible ration crds to ensure coverage of only eligible BPL and AAY families. As a result of this exercises, so far, 13 State/UT Governments have reported deletion of 67.45 lakh bogus/ineligible cards since July, 2006.

(c) As pointed out in the evaluation studies, there have been errors in targeting of eligible BPL and AAY families under TPDS in States but they are not a scam.

The Government has given instructions to all State/UT Governments to take action as per law against the persons found in possession of bogus or fake ration cards and the Government Staff found responsible for issuing ration cards for ineligible persons.

Global food crisis

3427. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the international monitoring agencies have warned of global food crisis as reported in the print media;

(b) if so, whether the production of wheat and rice is much below the actual consumption;

(c) if so, whether in view of remarks of the international monitoring agencies and latest estimates of International Grains Council, Government proposes to take any remedial measures; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Agencies like FAO, OECD and IGC during January-February, 2008 had projected hardening of global food prices on account of lowest food inventories around the globe. More specifically, however, in the list of 37 countries worldwide reported to be currently facing food crisis by UNFAO Report No. 2 (April 2008) — "Crop Prospects and Food Situation", India does not feature.

(b) UNFAO Report No. 2 (April 2008) — "Crop Prospects and Food Situation" has forecasted a rise of record 647 million tons (6.8% up from 2007), 441 million tons (1.8% up from 2007) of world wheat and rice production in 2008, respectively, and 1006 million tons of world food consumption of cereals (1% up from 2007).

(c) and (d) Though India is not listed as one of the 37 countries facing food crisis as per FAO's Report No. 2 (April 2008), as also by International Grains Council — Grain Market Report (GMR 376 dated 28.3.2008), the Government in all have initiated many remedial steps to keep Food Security of the country sacrosanct, which broadly, *inter alia*, are (i) Fiscal Measures — reduction of tariffs to zero for rice, wheat, pulses, edible oils and maize, to 7.5% on hydrogenated oils and vegetable oils, to 30% on butter and ghee and withdrawing

4% additional CVD on edible oils. (ii) Administrative Measures like banning of exports of non-basmati rice, wheat, major edible oils, major pulses, imposition of stock limits on rice, wheat, edible oils and oil seeds, periodic enhancements in MSP for rice and wheat, using MEP to regulate exports of onion and basmati rice, maintaining CIP for rice and wheat and measures taken by Forward Market Commission and (iii) Monetary Measures taken by RBI by sucking liquidity of Rs. 30,000 crores from the system by increasing CRR to 7.5% on October 30, 2007.

Amendment in essential commodities act to check price rise

3428. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has expressed great concern over price rise and its impact on 'aam aadmi' and urged the State Governments to strengthen the PDS and act against hoarders and speculators;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the necessary amendments would be made in the Essential Commodities Act to give more powers to States to take action against hoarders and speculators; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Rise in prices as well as availability of Essential Commodities have remained the concern of the Central Government and accordingly State Governments/Union Territories are being advised from time-to-time to take appropriate action against hoarders under the provisions of "Essential Commodities Act, 1955" and "Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980". The Central Government has also been holding review meetings with Food Secretaries of all States/UTs with a view to ensuring smooth functioning of Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) in the country.

(c) and (d) State Governments are vested with wide powers to take action against hoarders through State Control Orders issued by them under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The Central Government has *vide* Notifications dated 29.8.2006 and 7.4.2008 further empowered State Governments by keeping in abeyance certain provisions of the Removal of (Licensing requirements, Stock limits and Movement Restrictions) on Specified Foodstuffs Order 2002. State Governments can now issue Control Orders regulating purchase, movement, sale, supply, distribution or storage for sale in respect of wheat, pulses, rice, edible oil and edible oilseeds. No further amendments to the Essential Commodities Act are under consideration.

Poor families categorised as APL

3429. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has thought over the poor families who are being categorized as APL;

(b) whether it is a fact that these families, though poor, are not getting any benefit that is meant for the poor;